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Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 NRC-05 OES-09 SMS-01 ARA-10
TRSE-00 SAS-02 ACDA-12 DOE-15 SOE-02 EB-08 AID-05
/170 W
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R 210859Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0538
INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY DACCA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 15067

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, IN, JA
SUBJECT: VISIT OF INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER TO TOKYO

1. SUMMARY: MOFA AND INDIAN EMBASSY EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH AUGUST 14-17 VISIT TO TOKYO OF INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE. DISCUSSIONS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER AND PRIME MINISTER WERE EXTENSIVE AND RELATIVELY CANDID, ALTHOUGH MOFA OFFICIAL SUGGESTED THAT DIFFERENCES ON BASIC ISSUES (I.E., ROLE OF SOVIET UNION IN ASIA AND NUCLEAR POLICY) WERE INHIBITING FACTOR, AND INDIAN EMBASSY REGARDED CHINA DISCUSSION AS SUPERFICIAL. NO NEW AGREEMENTS OR COMMITMENTS WERE FORTHCOMING. END SUMMARY

2. DURING COURSE OF AUGUST 14-17 VISIT TO TOKYO, INDIAN
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FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE MET TWICE WITH FOREIGN MINISTER SONODA AND HAD HALF-HOUR MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA. (VAJPAYEE ALSO MET WITH MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY KOMOTO AND MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS USHIBA; HIS FOREIGN MINISTRY CONVERSATIONS WERE PRECEDED BY OFFICIAL-LEVEL TALKS WITH DEPUTY MINISTER MIYAZAKI COVERING LAW OF THE SEA AND NUMBER OF TRADE

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MATTERS.) ACCORDING TO MOFA SOUTHWEST ASIA DIVISION DIRECTOR SUGINO, DISCUSSIONS WERE DEVOTED PRIMARILY TO THIRD-COUNTRY AND MULTILATERAL ISSUES, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS ALSO CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION TO CERTAIN BILATERAL PROBLEMS, PARTICULARLY NUCLEAR POLICY. SUGINO THOUGHT INDIANS HAD ESSENTIALLY TWO BROAD PURPOSES IN MIND: TO TAKE MEASURE OF JAPANESE APPROACH TOWARD ASIA IN IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF CONCLUSION OF PFT, AND TO ATTEMPT TO IMPROVE BOTH ATMOSPHERE AND SUBSTANCE OF BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP.

3. WITH RESPECT TO FIRST OF THESE ISSUES, VAJPAYEE NOTED THAT HE WOULD BE VISITING CHINA IN OCTOBER, AND IN CONTEXT OF HIS PLANNING FOR THAT EVENT WISHED TO REVIEW JAPAN-CHINA RELATIONSHIP IN AFTERMATH OF CONCLUSION OF PFT. ALTHOUGH SUGINO SAID FOREIGN MINISTER SONODA OFFERED FULL BRIEFING ON HIS DISCUSSIONS IN PEKING, INDIAN EMBASSY COUNSELOR RAM INFORMED POLCOUNS SONODA SEEMED RETICENT IN HIS ACCOUNT, POSSIBLY BECAUSE HE HAD JUST RETURNED FROM PEKING AND WAS STILL ABSORBED IN ROUND OF BRIEFINGS AND INTERVIEWS TO TIDY UP DOMESTIC ACCEPTANCE OF PFT. MOST OF VAJPAYEE'S QUERIES RELATED EXPLICITLY OR IMPLICITLY TO THE SOVIET UNION. HE WISHED TO KNOW JAPANESE ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS UPON THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND UPON SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS OF PFT. VAJPAYEE CONFESSED THAT INDIANS HAD BEEN WATCHING JAPAN-PRC DISCUSSIONS OF PFT WITH CERTAIN ANXIETY, AND RETAINED SOME CONCERN WITH RESPECT TO POSSIBLE CONFIDENTIAL

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IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL STABILITY. (VAJPAYEE TOOK SIMILAR LINE IN STATEMENTS TO PRESS IN TOKYO.) SONODA REPORTEDLY EXPRESSED VIEW THAT PFT WOULD NOT HAVE SERIOUS NEGATIVE AFFECT UPON JAPAN-SOVIET RELATIONS, NOR WOULD IT BE CAUSE OF SIGNIFICANT FURTHER DETERIORATION IN SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS.

4. SONODA ASKED VAJPAYEE TO GIVE HIS ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET POLICY IN ASIA, PARTICULARLY SOUTH ASIA, REPORTEDLY IMPLYING SOME CONCERN WITH RESPECT TO SOVIET INFLUENCE IN SUBCONTI-NENT. VAJPAYEE REFUSED TO BE DRAWN OUT ON THIS SUBJECT, AND AT ONE POINT IN DISCUSSION OBSERVED THAT JUST AS SOVIETS WORRIED ABOUT U.S. ACTIVITIES IN ASIS SO U.S. SEEMED EXCESSIVELY CONCERNED ABOUT SOVIET PRESENCE. SUGINO OBSERVED THAT THIS BASIC DIVERGENCE BETWEEN JAPANESE AND INDIAN PERCEPTIONS OF SITUATION IN ASIA, I.E., ROLE OF SOVIET UNION, SEEMED TO INFLUENCE TO CONSIDERABLE EXTENT BOTH TONE AND DEGREE OF CANDOR OF SONODA-VAJPAYEE DISCUSSIONS ACROSS THE BOARD. AS A RESULT THERE WAS CERTAIN UNFORTUNATE SUPERFICIALITY IN MUCH OF THEIR DISCUSSION.

5. ON OTHER INTERNATIONAL ISSUES, SUGINO SAID VAJPAYEE

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DEALT AT SOME LENGTH ON SITUATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA,
EMPHASIZING IN THIS REGARD CENTRAL ROLE OF U.S. IN EFFORTS
TO BRING ABOUT A PEACEFUL TRANSITION. VAJPAYEE OBSERVED
THAT U.S. WAS PLAYING SIMILARLY CRITICAL ROLE IN MIDDLE
EASTERN SITUATION. IN COURSE OF DISCUSSION ON AFRICA,
VAJPAYEE SAID HE HAD TOLD CUBANS THAT THEIR JOB WAS
FINISHED, AND THAT THEY SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM THE CONTINENT.
ACCORDING TO RAM, PRESS INCORRECTLY REPORTED VAJPAYEE AS
SAYING INDIA HAD CONDEMNED NORTH KOREA AND CUBA AT BELGRADE
NON-ALIGNED MEETING, WHEREAS IN BRIEF COMMENTS ON BELGRADE
VAJPAYEE HAD CLARIFIED INDIA'S POSITION THAT NO COUNTRY
SHOULD TRY TO IMPOSE ITS IDEAS ON NON-ALIGNED GROUP, WHICH
REPRESENTED VARIETY OF OPINIONS.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 TOKYO 15067

6. IN DISCUSSION OF SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN, VAJPAYEE
STRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THEY WOULD SEEK BY ALL MEANS TO
MAINTAIN THEIR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE. VAJPAYEE ASSERTED
THAT APRIL COUP WAS "INTERNALLY MOTIVATED," AND WAS SURE
THAT AFGHANISTAN WOULD BE DETERMINED TO REMAIN STRICTLY
NON-ALIGNED. IN BRIEF DISCUSSION OF SITUATION IN INDOCHINA,
SONODA TOLD VAJPAYEE HE THOUGHT SINO-VIETNAMESE TENSION

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WOULD PERSIST INDEFINITELY, BUT WAS UNLIKELY TO SIGNIFICANTLY WORSEN. HE SAID JAPAN PLANNED TO EXTENT ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO VIETNAM AND WISHED TO MAINTAIN A FULL RELATIONSHIP. VAJPAYEE SAID INDIA ALSO INTENDED TO ASSIST VIETNAM ECONOMICALLY.

7. MOST IMPORTANT BILATERAL ISSUE DISCUSSED WAS NUCLEAR
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POLICY AND NUCLEAR COOPERATION. INDIANS SOUGHT FORMAL AGREEMENT FOR NUCLEAR COOPERATION SIMILAR TO GOI AGREEMENTS WITH SOME 20 OTHER COUNTRIES. IN COURSE OF DISCUSSIONS JAPANESE SIDE EMPHASIZED ITS COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES, IMPORTANCE OF ADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS AND NEED TO CURB NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION. SONODA NOTED THAT INDIA WAS NOT AN ADHERENT OF NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY, AND TOLD VAJPAYEE THAT IN ABSENCE OF NPT ADHERENCE, POSSIBILITIES FOR NUCLEAR COOPERATION WOULD BE EXTREMELY LIMITED, WHEREAS GOI ADHERENCE WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY FACILITATE SUCH COOPERATION. IN RESPONSE VAJPAYEE PRESENTED STANDARD INDIAN LINE ON NPT EMPHASIZING ACCEPTANCE OF SAFEGUARDS BUT REJECTION OF TREATY BECAUSE OF ITS INHERENT INEQUALITY, ETC. SUGINO NOTED THAT INDIANS WERE EXTREMELY INTERESTED IN PURSUING COOPERATION IN ADVANCED NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY WITH JAPANESE, AND PLACED PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THORIUM TECHNOLOGY. HOWEVER, HE SAW LITTLE PROSPECT FOR SIGNIFICANT DEGREE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION SO LONG AS INDIAN NUCLEAR POLICY REMAINED UNCHANGED.

8. ONE SUBJECT NOT MENTIONED BY SUGINO WAS ASIAN SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT. ACCORDING TO RAM, SONODA MADE PITCH FOR INDIAN SUPPORT, IN RESPONSE TO WHICH VAJPAYEE SAID THAT IF MONGOLIA SHOULD PRESS ITS CANDIDACY INDIA WOULD FEEL OBLIGED TO SUPPORT INASMUCH AS MONGOLIA HAD PREVIOUSLY WITHDRAWN IN INDIA'S FAVOR. SHOULD RACE COME DOWN TO BANGLADESH AND JAPAN, INDIA WOULD PREFER TO ABIDE BY ASIAN GROUP DECISION, BUT IF NONE WERE FORTHCOMING COULD ONLY OFFER TO GIVE JAPAN'S CANDIDACY CAREFUL CONSIDERATION, BEING TORN BY DESIRE TO KEEP UP FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH BANGLADESH.

9. ALTHOUGH ECONOMIC COOPERATION OCCUPIED RELATIVELY
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SMALL PORTION OF DISCUSSIONS, IT WAS IMPORTANT PART OF VAJPAYEE'S BRIEF. SUGINO NOTED THAT JAPAN.INDIAN TRADE

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REMAINED EXTREMELY SMALL, TOTALING SOME $1.3 BILLION TWO WAYS WITH THE BALANCE IN FAVOR OF INDIA. VAJPAYEE EXPRESSED CONCERN AT DEPRESSED STATE OF JAPANESE IRON-ORE PURCHASES, WHICH SUGINO SAID REFLECT DEPRESSED CONDITIONS IN STEEL INDUSTRY, AND ALSO ASKED THAT GOJ CONSIDER MEASURES TO INCREASE PURCHASES OF PROCESSED GOODS. THERE WAS ALSO DISCUSSION OF JAPANESE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, WITH INDIAN SIDE NOTING THAT DISBURSEMENT OF JAPANESE LOANS DURING CALANDER YEAR 1978 WOULD BE SMALLER THAN GOI PAYMENT FOR DEBT SERVICING OF LOANS PREVIOUSLY EXTENDED; THERE WOULD BE "NEGATIVE ASSISTANCE" IN JAPANESE-INDIAN AID FLOW. SUGINO SAID THAT TO COMPENSATE, GOJ WOULD EXTEND ADDITIONAL COMMODITY LOANS, WHICH COULD BE DISBURSED QUICKLY, IN AMOUNT SUFFICIENT TO ERASE IMBALANCE.

10. SUGINO SAID THAT JAPANESE SIDE WAS SATISFIED WITH TONE AND CONTENT OF VAJPAYEE VISIT. WHILE DIFFERENCES ON IMPORTANT SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES LIMITED CANDOR AND DEPTH OF EXCHANGE, CERTAINLY JAPAN-INDIAN DIALOGUE HAD IMPROVED SIGNIFICANTLY OVER COURSE OF PAST TWO YEARS. NONETHELESS FOUNDATION OF JAPAN-INDIAN TIES, IN TERMS OF ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP, POLITICAL UNDERSTANDING, CULTURAL AWARENESS, REMAINED WEAK, AND CERTAIN FUNDAMENTAL PREJUDICES REMAINED TO BE OVERCOME. VAJPAYEE VISIT WAS SMALL STEP IN RIGHT DIRECTION IN WHAT WOULD BE LENGTHY PROCESS. INDIAN EMBASSY COUNSELOR, WHILE HE DID NOT ELABORATE TO THIS EXTENT, REGARDED VISIT AS UNEVENTFUL, USEFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF LAST YEAR'S DECISION DURING FOREIGN MINISTER HAYAYAMA'S VISIT TO NEW DELHI, TO HOLD ANNUAL MINISTERIAL EXCHANGES. MANSFIELD

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